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# THE GALLERY

## THE PHILADELPHIA ACADEMY EXHIBITION.



THE fifty-eighth annual exhibition of the Academy follows the National Portrait Exhibition, and the splendid galleries are now filled with a larger collection of good American pictures than could be brought together, perhaps, at any other contemporaneous exhibition in the country. Over six hundred numbers are included in the catalogue, there being—including 23 architects or firms of architects—339 artists represented, of whom more than a third are women. New York and vicinity furnish 109 of the artists, and 153 reside or have studios in or near Philadelphia. Twenty-nine of the artists send from Europe. These interesting figures are taken from the well-arranged and carefully printed catalogue, which, by the way, is superior in every way to such as are published officially for the use of visitors to the New York annual exhibitions. This year it is not illustrated.

It is not necessary to devote much space to criticising the pictures in detail, for most of the important ones have been noticed already in these columns on their appearance in recent New York exhibitions. The foreign contingent—to take the artists alphabetically—includes Henry Bacon's "Taking on the Pilot"—one of his characteristically graphic transatlantic steamer episodes—and "The End of a Long Day," showing a pretty child, sitting in a convalescent's chair, and languidly welcoming a splendid Newfoundland dog, which apparently has just burst away from its fastening; F. A. Bridgman's "Neighbors (on the Terraces, Algiers)," and an odd study (dated 1870) of a boy on a runaway horse; Maria Brooks's "Down Piccadilly, Returning from Covent Garden Market;" Howard R. Butler's "La Récolte de Varech," with its well-painted gray stretch of sandy shore and loaded wagon; Charles Danforth's "Histoire de Guerre," a young peasant soldier narrating his experience—carefully painted, but too scattered in composition—and "Les Bavardages," hard in drawing and dry in color; Leon Delachaux's "Pâques" (one of seven canvases contributed to the exhibition), a charmingly painted, low-toned picture of a Breton kitchen interior, with a group of kneeling choir boys such as go from house to house at Easter singing for eggs; Herbert Denman's very clever "Midsummer Day Dream," a large canvas showing an auburn-haired, comely lass, in gray, swinging in a hammock, with a sunny, green lawn for a background; Alexander Harrison's breezy "Open Sea" and his field of maize, both known to the reader by previous description; Robert Koehler's "In the Café," a vigorously painted picture of an impertinent young officer, who, lounging at a table, with his back turned toward the window, is staring at a modest-looking girl, seated at another table, putting on her gloves: her male companion—judging from the hat and cane on a vacant chair—has just left her, probably to pay the score; Charles Lasar's "Net Weavers," a very large and unpleasantly colored canvas of fishermen's wives or daughters; C. S. Reinhart's gruesome "Washed Ashore," which won the artist an honorable mention at the Salon last year; Julian Story's equally honored and still less agreeable picture, representing a French mob, and Mlle. de Sombreuil, a heroine of the Revolution, drinking a glass of blood to save her father's life; and E. L. Vail's "On the Thames," with its clever representation of London atmosphere and London shipping.

Amanda Brewster's solidly-painted "Incident au Village" reappears. J. G. Brown sends his "Ready for Action," a mischievous youngster in ambush, armed with a snowball. A. F. Bunner contributes reminiscences of Dutch travel, "A Holland Landscape—Come to Supper" and "Evening in Dordrecht," the latter a picturesque wharf scene, painted in a very low key,

sober grays and browns prevailing, with just a touch of red in the cap of a boatman in the foreground, and a balancing note of duller red, inclining to orange, which makes a relieving streak in the sombre horizon. Thomas B. Craig, a Philadelphian artist of the old school, has six landscapes showing pleasing variations of subject, and in all a genuine feeling for nature. One of these, "A Passing Shower," has quite a Constable-like effect, with the sun bursting through the rolling, overcharged, black clouds, and lighting up a corner of the meadow, with, near by, a red-roofed farm-house and frightened cattle hurrying to a place of shelter. The picturesque views, "The Hudson at Fishkill, Looking North" and "The Hudson River—North Opening of the Highlands," suggest the hope that some of our sterling New York landscape painters may have come nearly to the end of their craze for the barren swamps and moorlands of Long Island, and may once more have eyes for the matchless beauty of the noble Hudson, with its endless easel subjects. Charles Linford, another Philadelphian, contributes good landscape of somewhat more conventional type. From New York one finds "Harvest," by J. Alden Weir; "Early Morning," by Carleton Wiggins; Shurtleff's "Mountain Brook, Adirondacks," in gorgeous autumnal contrast to the sad-hued "Marshes of the Shiawassee," by C. Harry Eaton, "Break of Day," an excellent study of snow-clad fields, by W. S. Macy, and "Snowbound Pastures," by C. W. Eaton; W. T. Richards's interesting "Harvest Field," in a key unusually high for him; "Cold and Clear," by Bruce Crane, and other landscapes of varying merit by George Inness, Edward Moran, G. H. McCord, Burr H. Nicholls, Cropsey and C. H. Miller. C. D. Weldon, the popular painter of children and Japanese dolls, surprises us with his signature to a landscape called "An Old Orchard," very nice in some of its cool, gray passages, but a little muddy in color as a whole.

We see again Winslow Homer's splendidly painted "Undertow," showing the rescue, by a couple of sturdy seamen, of two half-drowned women. Thomas Hovenden, in "The Favorite Falcon," has a Lesrel-like subject of a lady and a cavalier in silk and velvet attire, which, while evincing much honest and careful work, fails to interest us like his genres of negro life, which one feels that he paints because he likes them. F. D. Millet sends "A Quiet Hour," introducing one of his characteristically pretty young women, carefully painted and all but faultlessly drawn. Frank Moss shows his "Song of the Shirt."

Among notable marines are F. K. M. Rehn's admirable midsummer sea, "Looking Down from the Rocks at Magnolia, Mass.;" W. T. Richards's "Summer Clouds;" De Haas's "Fresh Breeze," and "A Wild Night on the Jersey Coast," by Edward Moran.

Among flowers and still-life studies may be mentioned "Clematis," by Eleanor E. Greatorex; "Flowers by a Window," by George C. Lambdin, and Milne Ramsey's "Study in Pink and Yellow," an elaborately painted study of yellow roses loosely scattered over a ground of carnation silk—which also forms a background—with a light blue vase introduced somewhat riskily for complete harmony of color.

In the department of water-colors, etchings and drawings in black and white, there is much that is interesting, but nothing calling for especial mention; but in the department of architectural drawings, John Laffarge has a notable display of an even two dozen studies, not confined to architectural subjects. They include a "decoration for a page of Browning's 'Men and Women,'" the figure of "Prosperity" in one of the W. H. Vanderbilt staircase windows; a large water-color of one of the "Wise Virgins" for the Parker Memorial Window, in Trinity Church, Boston; a figure for the ceiling in the water-color room of Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt, and several charming color studies of Japanese temples. Four drawings by John Ruskin, lent by Mr. C. E. Norton, Cambridge, Mass., include a street view in Caen, part of the west porch of St. Mark's, and an old English hall. The artistic value of these is second to their personal interest.

## PARIS ART NOTES.

PARIS is a blessed place for artists in these days of mural decoration. The rebuilding of the Hôtel de Ville, of the Sorbonne, and of town-halls and museums in all the great towns—Rouen, Amiens, Lyons, Marseilles—has produced vast spaces of wall and ceiling, which require to be covered with paintings, and so many are the orders to be given that every artist of any note gets a share. At recent Salons we have had the privilege of beholding Titanic canvases for mural decoration by Puvis de Chavannes, Humbert, Besnard, Lagarde, Flameng, Dauphin, etc. This year the great pictures of the Salon will be decorative panels for the new Sorbonne, and next year we may look forward to an avalanche of decorative painting, destined to figure on the walls of the Hôtel de Ville. The decoration of the grand Salle des Fêtes of the Hôtel de Ville, consisting of five ceilings, has just been distributed among MM. Benjamin Constant, Aimé Morot, Gervex and Gabriel Ferrier. M. Benjamin Constant takes the lion's share in the vast central ceiling, on which he proposes to paint an allegory of "Paris consacrant les renommées," Paris giving her sanction and exalt to the élite of those who have won fame in the world.

M. Benjamin Constant is to be the hero of the Salon this year; for it is generally understood that the grand medal of honor will be awarded to him. His exhibit consists of three panels each measuring 14x24 feet, and destined to adorn the walls of the council room of the new Sorbonne. Taking his inspiration from Paul Veronese, the artist has set his compositions in an architectural frame-work, figuring, as it were, some classic marble portico. Thus each panel has its marble settle and floor and its two pillars, with their capitals and entablature, through and beyond which is seen the background. In the central panel the background shows the old Sorbonne and the statues of its founders, Robert de Sorbonne and Richelieu, while in the foreground, clad in their ceremonial academic robes, and seated on the marble settle, are the present rector, M. Gréard, and the deans of the several faculties, of course portraits from life. The panel representing the Belles Lettres has a background of summer landscape, and in the marble hemicycle are beautiful female figures personifying poetry, eloquence, history, philosophy, and dramatic poetry. The panel of the Sciences personifies mathematics, mechanics, astronomy, etc.

The exhibition of the Cercle de l'Union Artistique, commonly called the Mirlitons, is very poor on the whole; it is a show of poor pictures signed by distinguished names, with here and there a good piece of work, such as Benjamin Constant's "Moonrise at Tangiers" and Bonnat's portrait of the sculptor Falguière. Cabanel's portraits are poor Cabanels. Jules Lefebvre's old peasant woman is barely rubbed on the canvas. Gérôme's portrait of a bearded man walking on a terrace and contemplating an impossible landscape is one of those productions that passes comprehension as it does description. Gérôme's other picture of a Cairo carpet-seller is a good Gérôme, but how antiquated, laborious, and utterly wanting in charm is all this arid and sleek brush work! To my mind Gérôme's pictures are always remarkable not for artistic qualities, but for the moral virtues which they imply in the painter. Meissonier exhibits a charming little portrait, almost a miniature, of his granddaughter, and a single figure, "Pasquale," which has remarkable technical qualities, which are all the more remarkable when we remember that Meissonier has just passed his seventy-third year. The picture presents us a model dressed in red breeches, doublet, frilled shirt, and other odds and ends such as you see at masked balls. This model is seated and pretends to play on a colossal theorbo. The background is bitumen, rubbed in merely as a set-off. The Americans are represented by Bridgman and Jules Stewart. The latter exhibits two portraits of ladies that are very graceful and refined, and the former two Algerian scenes, one of which, "Les Brodeuses," we shall be able to examine at leisure in the forthcoming Salon. THEODORE CHILD.